

Cool Tool Reflections Tier 1 – 2013

I had the opportunity to attend several Cool Tool sessions. An overview as well as my own perceived advantages and disadvantages are described below.

Screencast-O-Matic (S.O.M.) presented by Hiller Spires

- **Overview** - Screencast-O-Matic seemed to be most easily used by an instructor in order to present a lesson to a class in a flipped classroom situation. It also can be used after direct instruction for students who may want to revisit various steps in a process. However, we saw applications in our large group session with Rhys of how S.O.M. can be utilized by students to demonstrate content area knowledge and vocabulary as well as peer critique.
- **Advantages** – Provides opportunities for repeat instruction, allows for flipped classroom model, excellent for students who are absent to be able to keep up with classwork from home. There is a version of the software that is free of charge. Presentations can be saved directly to a computer or can be uploaded to media storage sites such as Youtube or Dropbox.
- **Challenges** – Requires a desktop or laptop computer with built in camera and/or microphone OR one of the above with the ability to attach a web cam and USB-style microphone. It takes a great deal of time to load and then encode/process content.

Symbaloo presented by Michelle Hagerman

- **Overview** – Symbaloo is an educational curating tool that is similar to its social curating counterpart, Pinterest. It allows the user to categorize websites by interest and can be organized in quadrants on the Symbaloo Matrix, or can be organized specifically by one type of interest or content per Matrix. This tool has functionality for both teachers as well as students who need to keep track of many different websites for various purposes such as research, study help, etc.
- **Advantages** - This tool is incredibly advantageous to visual learners who will be able to locate various websites just by knowing the identifying logo feature of the website. Teachers can easily limit what search tools are available for their students which can provide more time on task. The application is free of charge. There is a search function that allows users to find pre-created Symbaloos by subject or content area.
- **Challenges** – Creating a Symbaloo requires computer knowledge of basic web shortcuts. Like any curating tool, a user needs to be able to decipher between credible websites and junk.

Goodnotes presented by Margaret Hagood

- **Overview** - Using an iPad, Goodnotes allows a user to mark up pdfs, sketches, and diagrams using a stylus. The user can save the marked up files and share them with others.
- **Advantages** - Paperless, great for iPad users
- **Challenges** – Costs \$4.99, only available for iPad, stylus needs to be used for best writing quality.

Cel.ly presented by Jeremy Hyler

- **Overview** – Cel.ly is a controlled social networking application that is frequently used by classroom teachers and school districts. Homework assignments, test/quiz announcements, etc., can be delivered to parents and/or students in a timely manner and to multiple platforms.
- **Advantages** – Sender and receiver phone numbers are not revealed to either party. Responses to the sent messages are only visible to the original message sender. Decrease opportunities for cyber bullying. Can be used on multiple platforms including desktop computers, and many digital devices thus decreasing the digital divide because almost everyone can participate.
- **Challenges** - Does not allow for group interaction, some type of device and a data plan are required.

Animoto presented by Hiller Spiers

- **Overview** – Animoto is a very easy to use editing program that allows the user to import still images, video, music, and text to create dynamic and engaging video projects. There is a no cost version as well as a monthly and yearly pricing plan.
- **Advantages** – Can be used on multiple platforms including computers, tablets, and some mobile cellular devices. There is a no-cost option. There is a library of archived images, music and video. Videos can be saved locally and are easily available for web distribution via a link.
- **Challenges** – The no cost version limits the user to 30 seconds per video.